

The Musical World.

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THE BANDBOX.

(Continued from page 459.)

When the Strand re-opened, on Saturday, the 18th of November, it was so altered as to be almost a new theatre. A separate entrance to the pit had been added, as well as a staircase for the gallery. The proscenium had been re-arranged and enlarged, whilst the entire roof had been raised at least ten feet. These changes greatly conduced to the comfort of the public, but it must be confessed that the old snug and *bijou* appearance of the little Strand had entirely vanished with the new order of things. The first night was marked by the production of a burlesque on the opera of *L'Africaine*, written by Burnand, and composed by Frank Musgrave, in which David James, Thorne, Stoyte, and Miss Raynham all did good service. This was continued at Christmas, nor was there any further novelty of importance until February, 1866, when a new comedy, *The Fly and the Webb*, by Mr A. C. Troughton, was given with complete success. At Easter, *Paris*; or, *Vive L'empereur*, by Burnand, was produced with excellent results. *The Country Squire* and *The Two Polts* were presented for Mrs Swanborough's benefit on Monday, the 2nd of July, on which occasion the services of Emery and Henry Widdicombe—then of the Lyceum—were specially lent to the management by Fechter. A new burlesque, by F. C. Burnand, on *Der Freyschütz* was brought out in October, in which young Robson made his mark as "Catspaw." Mr Robson subsequently sustained his father's favourite part of "Jacob Earwig," in *Boots at the Swan*. A neat little comedy, *Neighbours*, written by John Oxenford, was given in November, in which Mr Gaston Murray joined the company, and at Christmas Burnand was again called upon to contribute the customary novelty, this time a burlesque on *Guy Fawkes*.

Kenny's old comedy, *Sweethearts and Wives*, was revived in an abridged form in April, 1867, with young Robson in Liston's original part of "Billy Lackaday." William Brough parodied the fable of *Pygmalion* at Easter, and in June *Our Domestic*, a two-act farce by Mr F. Hay, had a great success, as had also *Reverses*, a drama by H. B. Farnie, in July. Emery and F. Robson played in the latter. Early in October Mr H. J. Byron was once more employed here to bring out his new burlesque of *William Tell with a Vengeance*, in which all the Strand favourites played. William Brough wrote a comedy, *Kind to a Fault*, for the house in November, and on Boxing Night supplied the customary novelty, this time "an operatic extravaganza," *The Caliph of Bagdad*, which was pronounced very gorgeous and ear-splitting. *Old Salt*, a drama in two acts by John Daly, was produced for Mr Emery and Miss Nellie Moore in January, 1868. Mr Charles Harcourt came out in *Sisterly Service*, on Easter Eve, and on the same evening a new burlesque by William Brough, *The Field of the Cloth of Gold*, was given with a success more marked than had been obtained by anything since the days of *The Maid and the Magpie*. Supported by the entire strength of the company, which was now supplemented by the valuable addition of Miss Lydia Thompson, this piece ran for very nearly three hundred consecutive nights, to an uninterrupted succession of crowded audiences, nor was there any change in the programme until November, when the popular comedian, Mr J. S. Clarke, began an engagement in his favourite part, "Major Wellington de Boots," in *The Widow Hunt*—which was played as a first piece.

On Easter Monday, 1867, Brough's *Joan of Arc* replaced *The Field of the Cloth of Gold*, but, though capably played and got up, it failed to win a similar success. A new name, that of Miss Bella Goodall, now appeared amongst the performers. In May a farcical comedy, *Fox versus Goose*, by W. Brough, was given for J. S. Clarke, who, later, played in the farce of *The Toodles*, and in John Brougham's comedy, *Among the Breakers*. Mrs Raymond, an admirable actress of old women, was added to the company. At the end of August Byron's burlesque, *The Pilgrim of Love*, originally written for the Haymarket at Easter, 1860, was reproduced here, with Mr Edward Terry in Compton's part of the "King of Toledo." His engagement was limited, however, to the run of this piece. At the end of October *Ino*, by Mr Spedding, was brought out, and ran into the new year. In February, 1870, Colman's comedy, *The Heir-at-Law*, was revived, with J. S. Clarke as "Dr Pangloss," Turner and Mrs Raymond as "Lord" and "Lady Duberly." On the termination of Clarke's engage-

ment in March, Mr Harry Crouch was added to the company, in *Widow's Weeds*, a new comedietta by Oxenford and Horace Wigan. Mr T. Thorne had a farewell benefit on Friday the 25th of March, when Henry Irving played in *The Spitalfields Weaver*, and Miss Nellie Farren in *Stage-Struck Lovers*.

A burlesque by Byron on *St George and the Dragon* was the next novelty, and served to introduce Miss Kate Santley. Mr Edward Terry was also re-engaged to play in it. This was a success; but a revival of *The School for Scandal* on Saturday, the 16th of June, was less happy, the company being obviously unfitted for work so different to their customary occupation. The season terminated soon afterwards. The winter one was inaugurated by *The Idle Prentice*, a parody on *Jack Sheppard*, by H. B. Farnie, in which Mr Harry Paulton made his first bow to a London audience as "Blueskin." A new comedy, *Living at Ease*, by Arthur Sketchley, was given with complete success early in October, Mrs Raymond being really inimitable as "Lady Chudleigh." The Christmas piece, *Cœur de Lion*, was written by Mr John Strachan, an author who, up to this date, had only made his mark in the provinces. Miss Jenny Lee appeared in it.

The old Lyceum farce of *Who Speaks First* appeared in the bills of February, 1871, followed by *Up in the World*, a new comedy from the pen of "Arthur Sketchley" which derived excellent support from the practised hands of Edward Terry, H. J. Turner, Paulton, and Mrs Raymond. Byron's burlesque of *Orpheus and Eurydice*, retouched and rechristened as *Eurydice*; or, *Little Orpheus and his Lute*, was then revived, with Miss Jenny Lee in Marie Wilton's original part of "Orpheus." The Vokes family played at the Strand in *The Belles of the Kitchen*, for Mr Arthur Swanborough's benefit on the 14th of June. Mr J. S. Clarke returned later in the summer in *The Heir-at-Law*, and in October a new burlesque with the far-fetched title, *The Three Musketeers*, was produced in October. At Christmas, Miss Augusta Thompson, whose vocal powers were now somewhat on the wane, appeared in *Arion*, a classical comicality by F. C. Burnand. Mr H. P. Hall had now succeeded Mr Charles Fenton as scene-painter. Mr H. T. Craven reappeared in *The Postboy* at the beginning of 1872, and in March George Colman's comedy, *The Poor Gentleman*, was revived in a very careful manner with Clarke as "Dr Ollapod" and Miss Ada Swanborough as "Miss Worthington," whilst Mrs Raymond called up reminiscences of Mrs Glover as "Miss Lucretia MacTabb." In April a burlesque of the accustomed type, *The Last of the Barons*, written by a Mr du Terreaux, was brought out with the usual success. Mr H. J. Byron played in his own comedy, *Not Such a Fool as he Looks*, in July. On Thursday the 15th of August *The Vampire*, a bit of *Moonshine in Three Rays*, by Robert Reece, proved to be a skit on Boucicault's drama, the subject of which had been preferred by the author to the simpler one written by Planché. Terry was admirable as "Raby," but the novelty did not take as it deserved, and ran only for a few weeks. Another parody, *The Lady of the Lane*, founded by Byron on a drama, *The Lady of the Lake*, just then playing at Drury Lane, made quite a hit early in November, and obviated the necessity of any change at Christmas. J. H. Barnes and W. H. Vernon joined the company at the beginning of 1873, and, in conjunction with the author, appeared in Byron's new three-act drama, *Old Soldiers*, which had a lengthened run.

On Thursday the 18th of April was produced what was styled in the bills "a new *Bouffonnerie Musicale*," entitled *Nemesis*; or, *Not Wisely but too Well*, written by H. B. Farnie, with music selected from various composers, and arranged by Mr John Fitzgerald. The scenery was painted by Mr H. P. Hall. Marius, Terry, Harry Cox, the Misses Nelly Bromley, S. Turner, Angelina Claude, and Mrs Raymond were all seen to the greatest advantage in *Nemesis*, the mounting of which was the most lavish known at this house for many years, and perhaps a more charming piece of its kind was never known. *Nemesis* at once caught the public taste and speedily attracted all playgoing London to the Strand, running indeed for two hundred and fifty nights without a break. Mr Cowley's comedy, *The Belle's Stratagem*, was very effectively brought out on Saturday the 29th of November, with Miss Ada Swanborough as "Letitia Hardy," and a very promising young actor—Mr Terris—who had recently joined, as "Doricourt." This revival, in conjunction with the still popular *Nemesis*, kept its place in the bills for the rest of the year. The latter, however, was succeeded towards the close of February, 1874, by another

production of the same kind, also written by Mr Farnie. This was entitled *Eldorado*, the scene of which was laid in Paris. *Eldorado* was beautifully got up and capably played by the flower of the Strand company, but, although to all appearance as rapturously received on the first night as its predecessor, it failed somehow to rival it in attraction. The management, therefore, wisely fell back upon *Nemesis* at Whitsuntide, and subsequently varied the programme with other revivals. At Michaelmas Farnie's *Loo*; or, *The Party who took Miss*, introduced two very clever young actresses, Miss Lottie Venne and Miss Kate Phillips, and on Monday the 19th of October Miss Marion Terry made her first appearance here in *Old Sailors*, a new drama by Byron, which achieved a complete success.

(To be continued.)

CHESTER MUSICAL FESTIVAL.

(Continued from page 461.)

Thursday, July 23.

An oppressive morning, with signs of an approaching thunder-storm, cannot be called the ideal of Festival weather; but on these occasions anything is preferable to rain, and, as the "windows of Heaven" remain shut, the second day has so far passed off well. Again there was a large attendance at the Cathedral, though the figures, I suspect, show a falling away from those of yesterday. If this be so, the fact is one which everybody anticipated. Not all musical compositions possess the influence of Gounod's *Redemption*, while, if local interest was excited by the presence in to-day's programme of a novelty from the pen of the cathedral organist, there are undoubtedly very many persons for whom new works *per se* have no sort of charm. On the whole the Festival managers cannot complain; the public are supporting them quite as well as can reasonably be expected at a time of unusual depression, and there is no doubt at all regarding ultimate success.

The performance this morning concerned itself with a varied selection, opening after the usual prayers with Bach's unaccompanied motett for eight voices, the "Blessing, Glory, Wisdom, and Thanks." This was given in commemoration of the composer's birth, an event which, as everybody should now know, took place two hundred years ago. The choice of the motett was a wise one, assuming that the managers desired to present the grand old master in a form "understanded of the people." We may regret the fact, and some of us may not be able to explain it, but a fact it is that much of Bach's music tastes dry to the unsophisticated palate. The work in question is, however, marked by unwonted simplicity of structure and general attractiveness. It might even be labelled *ad captandum vulgus*, were the idea at all conceivable of Bach stooping from his lofty place to catch anything. Its themes, and their treatment in some cases, approach the character of prettiness; while the idea of the composer is so clearly set forth that the least intelligent hearer can listen with an assurance always gratifying that for once a great master and himself are on the same level of communication. The music is comparatively easy, though it tested the skill of the chorus with quite sufficient fulness, but put on no more strain than that really excellent body could bear. Each movement was sung with spirit and correctness, the "attack" in certain instances being especially good. It is true that the pitch dropped a little, but allowing for this, with due regard to the length and character of the work, nothing in the performance called for aught save praise. The Motet was followed by Handel's Concerto in D minor for organ and orchestra, No. 4 of the second set. Thus were both the illustrious musicians to whom the year 1685 gave birth fittingly remembered at a time when ignoring of either would have been an unpardonable offence. The Concerto in D minor is now very rarely heard. It was given in Westminster Abbey at the recent Handel commemoration, the soloist on that occasion being Dr J. Frederic Bridge, by whom it was played to-day. The credit of its revival belongs exclusively to Dr Bridge, and he may be congratulated upon making known to the general public a work so distinctive of Handel's genius that perfect acquaintance with the master involves some study of this particular creation. I say so with special reference to the opening movement, one of those stately and dignified effusions in which Handel's age was rich. The *adagio* in question has peculiar features among them, the prominence being given to three violoncellos, each playing an independent part, two of them doubled by bassoons. A special effect is thus gained, and not as regards colour alone, the combination having its own value in respect of both melody and harmony. Here also we meet with an anticipation of modern concerto, from an orchestral passage preceding the entrance of the organ and the coda being led up to by a solo in the nature of a cadenza. The other movements

are much less striking because more conventional, yet were they less important than they are, the *adagio* would serve for sufficient distinction and justify occasional use. The work was well played, the Westminster organist combining the stops with admirable judgment of effect, and executing the most rapid passages with a neatness that Handel in his grimmest mood might have unbent sufficiently to acknowledge with thanks.

Turning to the Chester organist's new oratorio, *Daniel*, it is needful to state first of all, that the work was composed as an exercise for the author's degree, and as such performed at his university. Let me hasten to remove any unfavourable impression this statement may have made. Academical essays are, as a rule, little qualified for presentation in quarters where mere learning goes for little. They are too obviously manufactured articles, and being made up for a purpose have no *raison d'être* when the end is gained. *Daniel* does not belong to the category just indicated. It is more than a vindication of the composer's right to be called learned in music, since it shows that he is a musician by natural gifts as well as by the acquirements that come of study. In this fact lies the justification of those who put *Daniel* into the programme. The libretto, compiled, I must presume, by Dr J. C. Bridge himself, is in narrative form, and consists, as to the story told in it, of extracts from the Book of Daniel, with these being associated a number of reflective texts appropriate to the situations in which they occur. It deals with the vision of Nebuchadnezzar: the failure of the magicians to divine what the King had dreamed and forgotten; the sentence passed upon them; the successful intervention of Daniel, and the proclamation of Daniel's God as only Lord. All this is told by the soprano and contralto soloists; the words of Daniel being given to a tenor, and those of the King to a bass, while the magicians are represented by the male chorus. It follows from use of a narrative form that the work is less dramatic than it might have proved under other conditions, and that it gives scope for more of lyrical and didactical pieces than would be permitted to break up a sequence of events represented in action. Having regard to the plain evidence of the music, I must regret that the book is not strictly dramatic. The composer amply demonstrates it. His strength lies in descriptive and characteristic writing rather than in lyrical expression. In the one he is strong, and achieves results which I take to be but suggestions of greater strength yet untried; in the other he is comparatively weak, though by no means to a uniform extent, and, moreover, especially liable to drop into commonplace. As regards the last-named point, *Daniel* is decidedly a provoking work. Often when the music is taking a lofty flight, and seems to be triumphantly nearing the goal, it sinks down like a weary lark, and finishes quite tamely. There are cadences in the oratorio which may, without injustice, be described as pure conventionality by comparison with antecedent passages. After taking due note of this fact, strength, and not weakness, yet remains the chief characteristic of the work. Dr Bridge, who is a young man, may not have in his hand the master-key which unlocks the treasure-house of musical expression as applied to feeling; but when he wants to suggest a thought, or depict a scene, he goes to the mark with a directness scarcely estimated, I should say, by himself. This is obvious in his treatment of passages like "The depth saith, 'It is not in me,' and the sea saith, 'It is not with me.'" It appears also in the dream music, in the choruses of the magicians, in the concerted number that contrasts the idols of the heathen with the God of heaven, and in the instrumental movement descriptive of Daniel's vision. In all these power dwells, the manifestation of it being heightened by picturesque use of orchestral means. To a gratifying extent we note individuality likewise. While in the weaker lyrical numbers the influence of Mendelssohn and Spohr is rarely absent, as to counterpoint Dr Bridge shows himself sufficiently resourceful. The oratorio contains one developed fugue which, if not satisfactory to completeness—the composer once drops into a commonplace sequence—gives proof that he has mastered a very important technical form. Taken as a whole, *Daniel* should draw towards its author looks of hope. It indicates him as one of the men who in the near future will lift up English art. To this end, however, the faults of the work must be seen and avoided. The performance was quite successful in all respects; both chorus and orchestra acquitted themselves admirably, while the solos were in safe hands. Miss Anna Williams and Miss Hilda Wilson answered for the narrative, giving it with just emphasis and clear enunciation, the first-named lady acquitting herself capably, also in an important air, "They that be wise shall shine as the sun." Mr Maas sang the music of Daniel splendidly, his fine voice and expressive power combining with great effect, while Mr Santley, as the King, did all that was possible for a part which might have been made more prominent with advantage. That Dr Bridge conducted his own music with the advantage of perfect knowledge goes without saying. In the second part of the programme, where an orchestral arrangement of an over-

ture written for the organ by Mr E. H. Thorne, and Rossini's *Stabat Mater* (solos by Miss Anna Williams, Mdme Patey, Mr Maas, and Mr Brereton) were given, there is no need for remark, save one expressing general commendation of the performance.

The music-hall was crowded to excess this evening, Berlioz' *Faust* being an attraction sufficient to outweigh the discomfort of packing in a small and ill-ventilated room. *Faust*, which had so brisk a run in London some time ago, appears now to have dropped out of mind, but in the country its favour is far from exhausted. No work in the present programme has drawn to itself so much regard from local amateurs, testimony to this effect being found in such an eagerness on the part of applicants for unreserved places that it was thought expedient to grant early admission on payment of an excess fee. How much the undying interest of the story had to do with popular desire is a question open to nothing better than speculation. Possibly many were eager to attend *Faust* simply because they had read Goethe, or heard Gounod on the same theme; in any case it is safe to say that the music of Berlioz added to rather than abated the charm. All can to some extent or other appreciate it, feeling the power of its originality and the force which audacity in art never fails to exercise even upon those who are resolute enough to condemn it. Fortunately the managers of the festival were able to place the characters in exceptionally safe hands—those, indeed, which helped to carry the work triumphantly through its London experience. With Miss Mary Davies as Marguerite, Mr Lloyd as Faust, and Mr Santley as Mephistopheles, nothing was left to desire in this regard. It is equally true that under such circumstances nothing is left to say, either of description or criticism. Every amateur knows the sympathetic and refined manner in which Miss Mary Davies renders the music of the heroine, making it more than ever delicate and beautiful by art to which the same terms apply; every amateur knows, likewise, the high qualities brought to the part of Faust by Mr Lloyd, who has made it his own in a special degree, just as Mr Santley has made his own the characteristic music of the Tempter. For the rest, it will be assumed that the band and chorus did justice to the task devolving upon them. Neither has tripped during the Festival, and it is not likely that I shall have to speak of failure throughout what remains of the proceedings. Dr Bridge conducted with his usual skill.

Friday, July 24.

A work representative of Mendelssohn filled the cathedral programme this morning, but it was not *Elijah*, festival usage in this case being disregarded for *St Paul*. Undoubtedly the latter of these great works is the more popular, and the reasons are not obscure. *Elijah* abounds in dramatic interest above the sister oratorio. Its general treatment is better adapted to modern taste, and there are numbers in it productive of more striking effect. To put the matter briefly, *Elijah* possesses to a greater extent than *St Paul* the qualities which appeal to the public at large. At the same time, it by no means follows that the one work should be always preferred to the other. Musicians, indeed, recognize a very strong argument in favour of that which is the less popular. They note in *St Paul* a more uniform artistic interest, a specially attractive development from the Bach model, and a command over refined expression of feeling, which, to say the least, is equal to anything in *Elijah*. On these accounts they rightly argue that the New Testament oratorio has long been and still is unjustly treated by concert-givers and managers of festivals. No such charge can now be brought against the authorities here. To honour *St Paul* they chose to leave *Elijah* out of their programme, ignoring the almost certainty that by doing so they were going dead against pecuniary interest. I am glad to mention this on general as well as special grounds; it may serve for an example and corrective wherever there is a tendency to regard musical festivals simply as machinery for raising money. To some extent, no doubt, commercial principles must be consulted even in such a matter, but there is all the difference in the world between the prudence that guards against financial disaster and the extravagant precaution which virtually measures success by a profit balance.

The attendance in the Cathedral this morning was smaller than on any previous occasion, though not so limited as to be discouraging. As a matter of fact, it exceeded my own expectations, while nothing could possibly have paid a greater compliment to Mendelssohn's work than the deep and well-sustained attention of the audience. The beautiful and touching music obviously made its mark, and, I hope, secured for itself new friends against the day when *St Paul* will come out of comparative obscurity, and take the place due to merit of the highest class.

By the way, there was a special fitness in the selection of this oratorio—fitness arising out of personal considerations, it is true, but none the less noteworthy on that account. The Dean of Chester

(Dr Howson) is, as everybody knows, joint author of a life of the Apostle to the Gentiles, published years ago, but accepted to this day as a standard work fairly exhaustive of the subject. Dr Howson was present this morning, listening to the musical illustration of events, the details and significance of which can be known to none more fully than to himself. Something of sympathy with the interest he must have felt added no doubt to the pleasure of those who called to mind his relationship with the hero of the work.

The performance of *St Paul* was, in several important respects, fully equal to that of other compositions given during the week, but I cannot describe it as faultless, nor even with regard to the orchestra as of average merit. The fact was clear to me that the instrumental performers had set before them an unfamiliar task. In such a case the truth is always revealed by the wind band. Individual faults among the strings may pass without attracting much notice, but the players upon brass and reeds stand in the "fierce light" of a strong individuality. For them there is no hiding, and each deviation from the straight path attracts observation. This morning they were by no means happy. They played without confidence, therefore without precision, especially marring the music to the Divine words, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" Although, as a rule, the voices are at fault at this point, to-day the blame lay elsewhere. Nearly all the choruses were well sung. More rehearsal would have improved the chorales; but it was difficult to see how such numbers as "Rise up, arise," and "O! great is the depth" could have been improved as far as the voices were concerned. The solos, in the hands of Miss Mary Davies, Miss Hilda Wilson, Mr E. Lloyd, and Mr Santley, gave general satisfaction for reasons which I need not trouble to set forth in detail. Miss Davies is especially fitted to sing in *St Paul*, the qualities of her voice and style being those best suited to such airs as "Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets," and "I will sing of Thy great mercy." Her rendering of both this morning was conspicuous for purity of expression and charm of effect. Miss Hilda Wilson made her mark in "But the Lord is mindful of His own;" and Mr Lloyd, alike in the dramatic "Men, brethren, and fathers," and the purely lyrical "Be thou faithful unto death," sustained his great reputation as an oratorio singer *hors de ligne*. Even the recitatives acquired significance and force from the perfect intelligence and taste with which they were delivered. Mr Santley, engaged upon a familiar task, achieved a corresponding success. Whether he sang the song of Saul the persecutor or of Paul the convert, it was hard to conceive anything more appropriate. Dr Bridge again distinguished himself as a conductor, and, drawbacks notwithstanding, may be congratulated upon a satisfactory general result.

The festival came to an end this evening with a performance of *The Messiah*, and again did the noblest of all oratorios assert its supremacy in the affections of the public. By far the largest congregation of the week assembled, while the impression made by the music heard amid such appropriate and picturesque surroundings is little likely to be soon effaced. Those within the building were not the only listeners. A crowd gathered outside, greedily catching the strains that came through open door or window, and finding more than enough to reward them for patiently standing there. I need not dwell upon a performance the nature of which can be divined without aid, yet it is a duty to offer praise to those who earned it—above all, to Miss Anna Williams, Mdme Patey, and Mr Maas, for singing which was generally of a high—in some cases of the highest—order. Not often, for instance, have "He was despised," and "He shall feed His flock" been given with more skill and pathos than by Mdme Patey, who was in full possession of her rich means. Worthy to be associated with these efforts were those of Mr Maas in the opening solos and the Passion music. This artist seems to gain more and more command over feeling as time goes on, but whoever listened carefully to his rendering of "Behold and see" must have despaired of his ever reaching a point beyond it, so perfect was the vocalization, so rich and true the expression. The efficient services of Miss Anna Williams deserve like special mention, as also the effect of Mr Brereton's fine voice in the bass airs. Credit was again earned by the chorus, and in some measure by the orchestra.

Looking back upon the proceedings of the festival, those responsible for them must assuredly see reason to be thankful and to take courage. It is no easy matter to establish an institution of the kind in a city and district not especially musical. Prejudices have to be reasoned away, or, if that be impossible, boldly defied, public apathy has to be changed into sympathy, and sympathy that cannot of itself take the form of action, has to be stimulated with periodic vigour. Events show that there are men here in Chester capable of all this. While Precentor Stewart and Dr Joseph C. Bridge retain their posts, and are supported by the approval of the Dean, Chester festival is safe. This is a great thing to say in their honour, but it is the truth, and therefore well said.

MR HAROLD THOMAS.

We regret to announce that Mr Harold Thomas, a well-known and highly esteemed professor at the Royal Academy of Music, which institution he entered as a student in April, 1849, and was elected a professor in January, 1856, died suddenly of heart disease on Wednesday morning.

"THE MUSIC OF THE FUTURE."

(Concluded from page 461.)

(To the Editor of the "Musical World.")

SIR,—It was my intention to minutely criticise the contents of Mr Conway's pamphlet, but having already occupied so large an amount of your valuable space with my preliminary remarks, I must content myself by simply adding a few short extracts from that extraordinary production, in illustration of these remarks, thus :

1.—Not the descent of a hero into Helheim are we assembled to mourn, but to witness the ascent of an artist to Valhalla,—Hall of those who prevail. Wagner is dead; the Poet-Composer lives. It was the faith of our fathers that into Valhalla passed only those who had died in heroic struggle; not those who had sunk into disease or the feebleness of age. Therein also is a truth. For their Valhalla is a vision of the supreme realm of nature; it was built by the human imagination for those whose earthly work seemed not yet done, whose cause was still alive, whose death was inconceivable. It was not for those whose old age had denied the dreams of their youth, who had sunk into timidity and concession, unsaying what healthy life had said, undoing what it had done.

2.—Wagner was born free of the Christian dogma. As his religious enthusiasm was developed, along with his intellectual culture, he recognized in Judaism the enemy with which Art had to contend in recovering for man his lost religion. Judaism, and its expansion in Protestantism, represent a coarse realism, a hard literalism, insisting that fable shall be accepted as fact, imprisoning its ideals in impenetrable blocks of dogma.

3.—Wagner also did his best, and did not die before he had set forth on his stage of fair creations each finest feature of the Christian legend, and sung every secret of human truth hid from the blind eyes of bigotry. The world is indebted to this mind, quite separated from Christianity as creed or system, for visions of the human meanings in it, the disowned beauty of it, such as no credulous Christian ever caught, and for hearing the still sad music of humanity that for eighteen centuries had been its unheeded burden.

4.—Leaving then, for the moment, consideration of how far Wagner was able to fulfil his aim, let us look at the aim itself. To me it appears as one born of the new spiritual life which distinguishes our age.

5.—Nobler even than his Alpine range of heights is the aim to which he has pointed the Art of the future. His creative spirit has brooded over the chaos of Norse nature-worship and brought it into order and beauty. It has hovered over the deeps of mediæval superstition and led forth an Eden with sacred bowers, where the heart holds commune with its ideals as with angels.

6.—While these men were creating a new poetic drama, an evolution was going on in musical expression which brought it to an elevation which nearly fulfilled Plato's dream of a music expressing the cosmic harmonies.

7.—If gods, fairies, gnomes, witches, spoke the listener's familiar speech, even in metre, they were vulgarized. They needed more perspective; they needed removal to some region where they should not claim to be real, and yet should idealize the real. That could be done, and was done, only by giving these ideal forms musical expression. That instantly carried them beyond the criticism of realism and science and gave them perfect freedom of creation in their own sphere. Wagner was the man who made that discovery; and, still apart from the works in which he embodied it, he was the man who invented an organ able to combine the highest poetry and the highest music into an artistic expression which neither alone had attained, or can possibly attain.

8.—There is further mystical beauty in *Lohengrin*, which I must leave you to study. And there is still more in Wagner's last work—*Parsifal*. This, indeed, comes so near being a Passion Play that our pious guardians, who arrange our religion for us, have announced that it must not be produced in London. But there is an English translation of the libretto, and it has impressed me as one of the great perceptions of our time.

As I may not have another opportunity of referring to this subject, allow me to say a few words in reply to a plea that is frequently set up for the music of Wagner and of his many humble imitators, when all other arguments in its favour have failed. "But," say its admirers, "you must admit that great credit is due to them for putting together so cleverly and correctly such an immense mass of notes; each having its proper progression," &c. In reply, I, in illustration of the case, call poetry to my aid. All poets have hitherto been bound by certain strict laws, which, of course, fetter to a certain extent their genius. Those laws command that each line shall contain a certain number of syllables, or feet, and no more, that certain lines must terminate with certain sounds, &c. Now suppose a new

poet to arise, a "social reformer," a Wagner, who should determine to cast off all these old-fashioned trammels, allow himself perfect freedom of thought and action; put as many syllables into his lines as he may please, and terminate those lines in any way he may think proper.

Now the least we have a right to expect from such a free, unfettered poet, would be verses that should be equally charming with those of his law-bound and law-abiding predecessors (or where is the improvement?). Whereas, should those verses grate on the ear, and prove unintelligible to an ordinary understanding, should we be willing to allow that the fact of his having placed so many words on paper sanctioned the placing him in the same category with Milton, Pope, Goldsmith, &c.?

Now, those old-fashioned composers, named Beethoven, Mozart, Haydn, &c., wrote, like the old-fashioned poets, according to fixed and very severe rules; and the result of their labours was a long series of works that have charmed two or three generations of educated lovers of music; and will afford equal delight to many generations yet unborn. And are we to equally admire and applaud a man who, having entirely freed himself from all rules, constituted himself his own legislator, writes music that, with some notable exceptions, grates on our ears, disappoints our expectations, and offends our understanding? Such plea, then, is palpably absurd.

Compare the much-lauded introduction to *Die Meistersinger* with the finale of Mozart's "Jupiter" symphony. In both these compositions we find a number of various subjects working together, interwoven as it were. But how do they work? Why, Mozart's workings are like the marvellous web of the skillful spider; all laid out with mathematical correctness. There is form, symmetry and intention; the subjects cross each other at regular intervals, at right angles, or run perfectly parallel, or take some other well-defined geometrical form; whereas, Wagner's subjects present some such form as that which is assumed by an opened skein of worsted after a couple of playful kittens have amused themselves with it for half-an-hour or so. In the former, every subject is perfectly audible to the listener from the first note to the last, while its combination with the other subject or subjects is harmonious and pleasing in the highest degree; whereas, in the *Meistersinger* overture the subjects, like the loops in the tangled skein of worsted, peep out here and there sufficiently to show that the threads of which they form part are lurking about somewhere, but where they begin or where end Wagner himself could scarcely tell, while the confusion arising from the admixture puzzles and worries the listener. Apologising for so lengthy a communication, I remain, Sir, yours sincerely,

THOMAS REYNOLDS.

ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA.

The opera chosen for the closing night, Saturday last, July 25, was *Il Trovatore*, in which, as Leonora, Mdme Patti sang and acted with an effect that she herself has never transcended. Her brilliant vocalization and intense dramatic sentiment were manifested with signal success in the several situations in which Leonora is concerned. The character has long been among Mdme Patti's most important parts, and the applause bestowed on her performance of it on Saturday by a crowded audience proved that it has lost none of its attraction for the public. A special word of praise is due to Mdme Macvitz, who, as Azucena, displayed vocal and dramatic merits such as she had scarcely before manifested. Signor Gianini as Manrico, and Signor De Anna as the Count di Luna, sang with much effect in the declamatory portions of their music, and subordinate characters were efficiently filled. After the termination of the opera Mr Mapleson came forward and stated that his arrangements for the season had been made in great haste, asking the indulgence of the audience for any shortcomings in his endeavours to continue the existence of Italian Opera here.

On Saturday, June 20, Covent Garden Theatre was re-opened for operatic performances—an unusually late period, and after several rumours that no such use of the house would be made during this summer. The scheme arranged by Mr Mapleson was for two performances weekly (on Tuesdays and Saturdays), Mdme Adelina Patti appearing on each occasion. Some Thursday evening performances were added to the original plan, Mdme Alma Fohström having been brought forward as prima-donna on these occasions, when she proved herself an accomplished artist, both as a vocalist and an actress. M. Engel deserves recognition for his effective performance as Don José in *Carmen*, in which part the artist was far more successful than in other operas. The reappearance of Signor Del Puente as the Toreador in the work just named was a valuable aid to the general effect thereof. The fine singing of Mdme Scalchi in several instances has been an important feature, another having been the skilful co-operation of Signor Arditi as conductor of all the performances.—H. J. L.

ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC.

The annual distribution of prizes to students of the Royal Academy of Music took place at St James's Hall on Friday, July 24. The awards were as follows:—The Charles Lucas silver medal to J. E. German; the Parepa-Rosa gold medal to W. Nicholl; the Stern-dale Bennett prize (ten guineas) to Jane Taylor; the Llewelyn Thomas gold medal to Blanche Murray; the Evill prize (ten guineas) to C. Copland; the Heathcote Long prize (ten guineas) to F. J. Gostelow; the Santley prize (ten guineas) to S. B. Webbe; the Bonamy Dobree prize (ten guineas) to E. Burton; and the Kelsall prize (a violin) to Winifred Robinson. Other prizes, certificates of merit, and commendations were bestowed on numerous pupils. The ceremony was preceded by some part-singing by the female choir of the institution, and an introductory speech from the Principal, Sir G. A. Macfarren. The awards were distributed by Lady Aberdare, after which an address was delivered by Lord Aberdare.

THE LONDON ACADEMY OF MUSIC.

At St George's Hall, on Friday, July 24, Mdme Adelina Patti presented the medals to the successful professional and amateur competitors at the recent examination held in connection with this academy. The proceedings commenced with a violin solo by Miss Cardew, followed by the "Shadow Song" (*Dinorah*) by Miss Steel, whose efforts evoked considerable applause, as did also Mr Reakes's singing, which brought the first part of the programme to a conclusion. Dr Wylde, the principal, then addressed the students, and said that for many years it had been their pleasure and privilege to be favoured with the presence of that esteemed musician, Sir Julius Benedict. They would long cherish the memory of their departed examiner, and should long regard as a monument the name he had left behind. That evening they were favoured with the brightest possible omen in the presence of Mdme Patti, the most accomplished artist not only of to-day but of all recorded time. Mdme Patti then presented the awards. Gold medals were given to Misses Catherwood, M'Intyre, Steel, and Aida Jenoure for vocal music, the bronze medals for elocution falling to Miss Tilt and Miss Jenoure. Signor G. Garcia's prize of books was awarded to the latter also for sight reading. Numerous other medals were also presented to instrumentalists, vocalists, and students of harmony, and Dr Wylde having expressed the thanks of the members of the academy for Mdme Patti's sympathy with the students of that art in which she herself had attained such exceptional eminence, the proceedings closed with the performance of Balfe's operetta, *The Sleeping Queen*, in which Miss M'Intyre, Miss Jenoure, Mr Hart, Mr Tufnail, Miss Salmon, and Mr Trew took part.—*M. P.*

FOREIGN BUDGET.

(From Correspondents.)

BERLIN.—According to report, Wagner's *Siegfried* will be put in rehearsal very soon after the re-opening of the Royal Operahouse. The character of Siegfried will be sustained alternately by Herren Niemann and Ernst, and that of Wotan by Herren Betz and Krolop. Herr Lieban will be Mime; Mdme Voggenhuber, Brünnhilde; and Mdme Leisinger, the Wood-Bird.—At Kroll's Theater, Herr Robinson has appeared with much success as Renato in Verdi's *Ballo in Maschera*, and Mdme Klafsky as Valentine in *Les Huguenots*. Both were warmly applauded.—After acting for ten years as president of the Musical Section of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Herr W. Taubert has, owing to ill health, declined to offer himself for re-election, and Professor M. Blunner, director of the Singakademie, has been chosen to fill the office for the present year.

DRESDEN.—According to the official report just published, the Royal Conservatory of Music was attended last year by 769 pupils of both sexes, of whom 513 were natives of Saxony, while 125 came from other parts of Germany; 34 from Great Britain; 30 from Russia; 24 from Austro-Hungary; 20 from America; 10 from Switzerland; 3 from Sweden and Norway; 2 each from the Netherlands, Roumania, and France; and 1 each from Italy, Portugal, Turkey, and Australia.

HAMBURG.—Paul Geisler's opera *Ingeborg*, hitherto performed only in Bremen, where it met with a highly favourable reception, is accepted at the Stadttheater, and will be produced there next May, with Mdme Katherina Klafsky as the heroine.

ANTWERP.—Mdme Schiפק, the well-known Vienna conductress, has been giving concerts at the International Exhibition. She was the first woman to form a band containing female performers, and for twenty years has fully maintained her high artistic reputation. Her present orchestra consists of 45 members of the fair sex, and 10 men.

CRYSTAL PALACE.

The Carl Rosa Company began last week a series of three performances of operas in English. M. Massenet's *Manon* was the work chosen for the first occasion. This opera (one of its composer's most important productions) was first brought out at Paris in January last year, and was given in an English version by Mr Carl Rosa's company at Liverpool in January last, and at Drury Lane Theatre in May. On both those occasions, and last week at the Crystal Palace, the title-character was represented by Mdme Marie Roze, and that of the Chevalier des Grieux having been sustained in London by Mr Maas and at Liverpool by Mr B. McGuckin, who again filled it at the Crystal Palace representation. We so recently and so fully noticed the work that brief comment may now suffice. Mdme Marie Roze again acted and sang finely in the several situations in which *Manon* is prominent; and Mr McGuckin gave fresh proof of his recent great progress as a dramatic vocalist. Miss M. Burton, Mr Burgon, Mr J. Sauvage, Mr W. Clifford, and others contributed to the general efficiency of the performance, which was ably conducted by Mr Goossens. *Faust* was announced for Thursday afternoon, and Mr Goring Thomas's *Nadeshda* for this day (Saturday).—H. J. L.

Songs for Sunday Evening.

II.—"HOW SWEET AT TWILIGHT'S GENTLE CLOSE."

How sweet at twilight's gentle close
With kindred hearts to meet,
And linger, ere we seek repose,
Around the Mercy-seat.
Faith clasps the hand of Love divine,
And soars to worlds unknown,
Then every spot becomes a shrine
And every heart a throne.

What hallowed thoughts our spirits cheer
As grace to grace is given!
Our stony Bethels then appear
The very gate of Heaven;
And, gazing through its portals wide,
Faith sees the ransomed throng,
And hears at holy eventide
The echoes of their song.

O'ershadowed by His precious grace,
With nought of earth between,
Sweet glimpses of the Saviour's face
Are sometimes dimly seen.
Such moments of surpassing love
None but the saint can know,
Whose heart is fixed on joys above
And not on things below.

Copyright.

J. S.

Owing to the cholera, there will be no Italian opera this season, as intended, at Cartagena.

ILLNESS OF DR SPARK.—The Leeds Borough organist is, we regret to state, suffering from congestion of the brain. His condition was improved yesterday, however, and the attack is not thought to be of a serious nature.—*Leeds Mercury*, July 24.

MISS C. M. GRIFFITHS' RECITATIONS.—By some misunderstanding in the arrangements a very slight percentage of those invited were present at the Somerville Club on Thursday, July 23, to hear and adjudicate on the talent of Miss C. M. Griffiths, the consequence being that the several pieces she gave suffered somewhat, the audience not being sufficient to instil enthusiasm into the reciter. The whole affair, therefore, lacked life. Miss Griffiths is an elocutionist of some ability, being equally at home whether the piece she recites be grave or gay. Among the works given were Shelley's ode "To a Skylark," "The Captive," by Lewis, selections from Bret Harte, *Helen's Babies*, &c., the most successful being "Thady O'Flynn" and the children's scenes. An interesting poem of her own, "Wedding Bells," was given by Miss Griffiths with impressive effect. The recitations were varied by Miss L. Horlocks, who sang some well-known songs.—W. A. J.

BIRTH.

On July 24, at Euston Square, N.W., the wife of ETTORE FIORI of a daughter.

MARRIAGES.

On July 23, at All Saints, Cambridge, GERALD H. RYAN, third son of the late DESMOND RYAN, B.A., to ELLEN A., only daughter of A. T. ELLIS, of Parkside, Cambridge.

On July 29, at St. Mark's, Hamilton Terrace, by the Rev. Canon Duckworth, D.D., assisted by the Rev. — McKenzie (cousin of the Bride), RICHARD SMITH WILLIAMS, Esq., to MARIAN MCKENZIE, Associate R.A.M., also of the Philharmonic Society.

DEATHS.

On July 23, at Charlton Drive, Irlam Road, Sale, near Manchester, HENRY ARTHUR FORSYTH, aged 55.

On July 28, of heart disease and congestion of the lungs, at the residence of his sister, 90, Redcliffe Gardens, EDWARD FERDINAND PELLEW, Barrister-at-Law, Inner Temple, and Revising Barrister for South Wiltshire.

To ADVERTISERS.—The Office of the MUSICAL WORLD is at Messrs DUNCAN DAVIDSON & Co.'s, 244, Regent Street, corner of Little Argyll Street (First Floor). Advertisements not later than Thursday. Payment on delivery.

The Musical World.

LONDON, SATURDAY, AUGUST 1, 1885.

ALBERT GRISAR.*

(Concluded from page 464.)

Installed in the great city and destined to leave it no more, Albert Grisar worked with all the ardour of a young man enamoured of his art. In the first place he set about writing a second romance: "*Les Laveuses du Couvent*," which is very melancholy, and, also, full of movement. In this case, we must confess that the words were not worth much, but the music was exceedingly fascinating. Not only did people set about singing it pretty well everywhere and making it a companion piece to "*La Folle*," but the air was adapted to all the vaudevilles of the day, then a very popular kind of entertainment. This meant that the musician might push back the doors of whatever lyric theatre he chose with the certainty of seeing them open in a friendly manner. And such was the case during all Louis Philippe's reign.

The reader will easily believe that I am not going to draw up the long and sparkling catalogue of all the operas produced by our laborious rhapsodist, from *Le Mariage impossible* to the *Bégaiements d'amour*. I have already named his buffo-operas, which, for fine humour are incomparable. But how many other charming works there are. We all recollect *Sarah*, *L'Eau merveilleuse*, *Le Carillonneur de Bruges*, *Le Chien du Jardinier*, *La Chatte merveilleuse*, *Les Porcherons*, and *Le Naufrage de la Méduse*, for the man who created gaiety by an astounding cascade of notes touched also the tender chords of the heart. He could even draw tears. "My dear fellow," he said to me one evening, "in every art, that man is but a poor hand who cannot make people weep as well as laugh."

Daumier no longer visited the little Café in the Rue de Rivoli. As for the composer of *Bonsoir, Monsieur Pantalon*, he made his appearance there regularly every evening and did not leave till midnight. On a certain moonlit evening in July, five of us walked, like genuine peripatetics, from the Marly Horses to the Triumphant Arch, talking, by fits and starts, of all the topics of the day. "How are you employing your thoughts for the moment?" I asked the Musician. "On nothing," he replied, "and that is what renders me sad. My dear fellow, by dint of living in Paris, where he is so little with himself, a man at last drifts into the condition of a sterile fig tree. I have already informed you, I fancy, that I was dreaming of writing a grand opera, eh?" "Yes, you did: *Les Mystères d'Eleusis*."—"That's it. You can see the *mise-en-scène* now: a Grecian temple, a high priest, Athenian virgins, soldiers, philosophers, and Diogenes or Aristippus, I do not know which; and then a grand drama depending on these personages, a murder, an elopement, a conspiracy and an

execution. The first thing, however, is to get a possible book."—"Go and call on Auguste Barbier," I said.—"The author of *Les Jambes*? I thought myself of doing so, but I have been told that he lives like an anchorite, and does not expect anyone to trouble him, especially with a request that he will write verses. What think you of Philoxène Boyer?"—"I think that he is very learned, and that he possesses a great deal of talent as well as much skill in the art of turning verses in all rhythms, but he himself informed me that he was entirely devoted to his studies on Shakspeare, and that he would not interrupt them for an empire. Look, therefore, somewhere else."—"No, I shall look nowhere else, and for this reason: I feel that my vein of inspiration is drying up. Do not cry out. Life in Paris tyrannizes over me. A man has to go through a thousand and one kinds of servitude at the hands of the world. There is dressing, paying visits, going out to dinner at one time, writing a letter at another; then there is the porter, the postman, the landlord, the doctor, in a word, the whole boiling. Upon my word, I have a great mind to make my escape from this immense stone cage. The Muse is jealous; you know that. She likes a *tête-à-tête*. To be once more alone with her I shall have to run off, one of these fine days, into the heart of the desert."

We all took these words to be an artist's caprice, and began talking of something else. A few days subsequently, we learned, however, that Albert Grisar had left Paris. "Where the deuce is he?" asked some one.—"By Jove, perhaps he does not know himself!" replied a voice. Two seasons passed by without our being able to discover what had become of the father of *Gilles Ravisseur*. "Can he have been carried off by some English girl with ultramarine-coloured eyes?" asked one of the two historians of our band. Six months elapsed, when, one evening, Albert Grisar suddenly reappeared with a cigar between his lips, and a nosegay of red roses encircled by lilies of the valley in his hand. "Do you know whence I come?" he enquired, taking a seat. "The omnibus has brought me from Passy, but that is not my starting point. I come out of a monastery."—"Out of a monastery!" I exclaimed.—"Exactly; out of the monastery of Mont-Cassin, where I spent six months among the most amiable and tolerant monks on the face of the inhabited globe."

Pressed by our questions, he informed us that Mont-Cassin was a place of retreat for wounded spirits. Spacious cloisters provided with a sort of hostelry, gardens planted with lofty trees, one of the richest libraries in Europe, and a passable table. For forty sous a day, a sage or a student could live in this retreat far from the storms and follies of the world. It was to escape from the incredible frivolity of Parisian life that he had retired to this haven of refuge, where he had at length been able to dream at his ease, to meditate without being interrupted, and to arrange methodically the effects he proposed to introduce in *Les Mystères d'Eleusis*. "I shall go back to the monastery when I get a book," he added. We know he was not destined to go back. Death was taking aim at him, and Death is an archer whose aim is sure.

Albert Grisar had achieved ten grand successes, and might have made a great deal of money, but he was of too careless a disposition to think seriously of old age. Though he dressed correctly, and though he had always a little cash in his pocket, he did not on that account cease to be poor, or, to speak plainly, a Bohemian. On one occasion, as he and I were walking by the railings which run along the Terrasse des Feuillants, and the conversation turned on the difficult and burning question of laying up something to purchase bread in old age, he entered into a series of confidential communications of which I will here speak only with the greatest reserve. The charming musician had loved a woman, whom he had been compelled to discontinue visiting, and this woman was the mother of a child. "That child," he added, "is what binds me to life more than aught else. Well, by heroic efforts, I have saved thirty thousand francs. That sum has been placed in safe custody, and will be handed to the child when it attains its majority." Then he observed, "But she must not touch the poor little treasure!" adding, "Everyone except myself would have had two hundred thousand francs of savings lodged in the Bank of France. But what of that! I shall make it all up after spending a year at Mont-Cassin, whence I shall bring back *Les Mystères d'Eleusis* for the Opera. You will see! you will see!"

Alas! the grand lyric poem was nothing more than a house of cards. At the end of the winter, Albert Grisar fell ill and never

* From the Paris Art.

recovered. His last production was a rough sketch for the Bouffes-Parisiens, in the style of Offenbach's musical farces. It contained a grotesque air, sung by some soldiers, which caused great laughter. But the composer of *Ronsor, Monsieur Pantalon*, died without having shown us what he really could do. And the day the Press announced his decease, oblivious Paris tapped its forehead with its finger, as it were, and said, "Albert Grisar! By-the-bye, who was he?" an action and a question repeated every day.

Belgium has shown herself a little more grateful towards her glorious son—a second Grétry—but even she has not pushed her display of reverence very far. A marble bust of the Musician, consecrated to his memory, has been set up in a Museum at Antwerp, his native town, and that is all. Count correctly, and you will find that Albert Grisar ought to have at least a statue. Ten operas which have assisted three generations not to die of ennui deserve that much, do they not?

PHILIBERT AUDEBRAND.

MUSIC IN BELGIUM.

Antwerp, July 24.

At the ninth concert, given last evening in the spacious concert-hall of the International Exhibition, the Hungarian violinist, Tivadar Nachez, played Max Bruch's Concerto in G minor, with an extraordinary display of execution, the finale being electrical in effect, the sounds following each other as if they were part of the elements, instead of coming from the agile fingers of the artist. Apart from his executorial powers, M. Tivadar Nachez possesses an agreeable amount of expression and poetry, his reading of Stephen Heller and Heinrich Ernst's "Pensées Fugitives," in D major and F major, securing for him the certificate of much expression and fancy. In the second part of the programme M. Tivadar Nachez played Mendelssohn's Concerto, which created an enormous effect, and obtained repeated recalls for its executant, whose great abilities were here put to their utmost test. The remainder of the programme—with the exception of a singer, Mdle Blumel, who gave Senta's ballad from the *Flying Dutchman* and the Scena from *Ler Freischütz*, both numbers creditably—was devoted to the orchestra, Beethoven's *Leonora* (No. 3) Overture opening the concert. Following this was Wotan's "Abschied und Feurzauber" (*Die Walküre*), "Walküren Ritt," admirably conducted by M. Dupont, and Beethoven's "Eroica" Symphony.

Mdme Montigny-Rémaury played in the afternoon at the Exhibition on Erard's "exhibition" instrument, and elicited storms of enthusiasm from a crowded hall. The pieces chosen by the artist were mostly short specimens of Schumann, Mendelssohn, and Chopin's respective genius, and, in response to frantic applause and cheers for more, her favourite "Thomé" encore. Hopes are entertained that Mdme Montigny-Rémaury will return to and shine at the International Concert, to be held on Aug. 8, when some half-dozen countries will be represented.

Ghent, July 25.

The Conservatoire of this town celebrated its fiftieth year of existence last evening, when a performance of Berlioz' *Damnation of Faust* was given in the spacious theatre. The artists taking part in the work were all of Parisian notoriety, their names being sufficient to attest merit. M. Van Dyck, whose many performances of Tristan at Lamoureux's Concerts in Paris, was Faust, a part more calculated to suit his voice than that of King Marke's envoy, and giving him fuller scope for the display of those gifts which, in the Cornish Court's Knight, were differently tried and more severely treated. M. Van Dyck, after three years of public approbation (which, difficult to obtain, is very often still more difficult of retention), has made those improvements which, at the time of his Tristan performances two years ago were particularly noticeable, as indispensable to completing a legitimate vocalist, and which a short study of the salient points has produced. Accordingly M. Van Dyck proved himself at his best in *Faust*, the whole recitative at the opening, the soliloquy upon nature, and the course of the abyss, were points that the artist dwelt reverently and earnestly upon, his higher notes responding to the quivral chords in the Ode to Nature with remarkable sonority and resonance, at the same time never losing the poetic reading that this mighty scene engenders. Mdle Sarah Bonheur, from the

Paris Opéra Comique, sang Marguerite, with tendencies to usurp the composer's intentions in order to mould them according to the ordinance of opera comique, the result being as unsatisfactory as the mixture of two such opposite branches of an art would inspire, namely, the spoiling of both. Mdle Bonheur accordingly, with the exception of the "Roi de Thulé" musing, fared hardly in combating the many difficulties that surround Berlioz' heroine, but the "business brand" of a capital's theatre was sufficient to secure her public favour, which, to most performers, earned or not, is the culmination of their art. M. Blauwaert, in the part of Mephistopheles, was the genuine vocalist and faithful disciple of his master, that many previous performances at Lamoureux's Concerts proclaimed him to be; his rendering of the "Flea" song, and, above all, the "Serenade," in which he was admirably supported by the chorus of the theatre, were true examples of vocal art, and place him at the head of artists' investiture of the "difficult devil." Brander was ably sung by M. Cronny, of the Paris Lyrique, who creditably sustained the Amen. The conductor under whose beat the work was performed might have used his wand with less vehemence than the following circumstance proved, for when excitedly gathering together his players in the Amen, he unluckily caught the end of his wand in one of the violins, and lifting it swiftly up again, launched the violin up to the ceiling, much to the amazement of its owner, the instrument falling, luckily for its possessor, on the heads of the front row stalls, and thereby preventing its being totally smashed. A delay of some minutes ensued, whilst the sudden event just mentioned was being settled and the gravity of the audience resumed. An efficient chorus, made up of Conservatoire students, completed what, with small exceptions, went near to make up an excellent performance.

Brussels, July 27.

The operatic company of the Théâtre de la Monnaie are now nearly gathered together, rehearsals having commenced in complete form, the opening night of the season being fixed for Sept. 1. Meyerbeer's tropical opera, *L'Africaine*, will be the work chosen, to be followed the second night by Gounod's *Romeo and Juliet*, and the third night Wagner's *Meistersinger*, already heard in Brussels. The new manager, M. Verdhurt, is resolved on giving *Lohengrin* during the ensuing season, the title-part to be undertaken by a German tenor, and that of Elsa by Mdme Caron, now playing Brünnhild in Reyer's opera, *Sigurd*, at the Parisian Grand Opera. *Lohengrin* will be presented almost at the commencement of the season.

CONCERTS.

MDLE LILAS SPONTINI gave on Thursday evening, July 23, at the Athenæum, Goldhawk Road, before a numerous and enthusiastic audience, her fifth and last "West Kensington Park Popular Concert" of the present series. The programme consisted entirely of songs and instrumental pieces. Mdle Lilas Spontini delighted the audience in Logé's song, "A Dream of Yore," as well as in Roeckel's "The Enchanted Ground," with violin *obbligato* (encored), and in Schubert's "Serenade," arranged as a duet, with Mr Romilly, who also rendered very effectively Arthur Sullivan's "Once Again." Miss Hipwell sang with great expression Hope Temple's "An Old Garden" and H. Parker's "Once more," and, on the last-named being encored, gave Moir's "Never more" in admirable style. Mr Edward de Smissen made his first appearance on this occasion, and sang Verdi's "Infelice e tu credi" and Faure's "Les Rameaux" (encored). This young gentleman has a very fine sonorous baritone voice, and will prove by assiduous and careful training a very valuable acquisition to the concert-room. Mmes Maleske and Francis, Mdle Devrient, Miss Ellis, Mr Betjemann, and Herr Calm (violin), all contributed to the success of the evening. Mr Lindsay Sloper gave, in his usual masterly style, two pianoforte pieces, and Mr Logé two very effective ones from his own pen. On being encored in his "Farfalla," he gave a very pretty gavotte, also of his own composition. The conductors were Herr Carl Ryal, Mr T. Drew, Mr Russell Lochner, and Mr J. G. Calcott. As these concerts are to be continued in September, we wish the fair *entrepreneuse* all the success she so well deserves.—H. E.

ALBERT PALACE.—Mr William Carter's *Placida* and Rossini's *Stabat Mater* were presented last Saturday afternoon, and, despite extreme heat, the Connaught Hall was well filled, especially in the cheap places. Mr Caldicott presided at the organ, relinquishing on this occasion the conductor's *bâton* to Mr Carter, who ably con-

trolled his own Albert Hall Choir, which has done good service under him on many previous occasions. Strange to say, the choral singing was more satisfactory in the cantata than in the *Stabat Mater*. This is difficult to account for, unless it was due to the special rehearsals held for the former, Rossini's work being left to take care of itself. With the soloists the reverse was the case, Miss Patti Winter, Mdme Antoinette Sterling, Signor Fabrini, and Mr Watkin Mills being heard to better advantage in the *Stabat Mater*, Signor Fabrini making a decided hit in "Cujus animam," which he rendered with much pathos and dramatic force. The audience were not slow in showing their appreciation of the various numbers, Mr Carter acceding to an encore for the Processional March in *Placida*, which was excellently played by the band.—W. A. J.

THE LYRIC CLUB.—The last "At Home" at the Lyric Club took place on Thursday, July 23, when the rooms were more crowded than on any previous occasion. An excellent and varied evening's entertainment was provided, the following artists being amongst those who contributed to the lengthy programme, viz., Signors Bonetti and Bisaccia, Messrs E. Bending, G. Rower, Hirwen Jones, and H. Coffin, Mdme Hiramann, Misses Martin, and Annie Albu, besides an American humorous recitation by Mrs Barrymore, a musical sketch, *Up at Cambridge*, by Mr George Grossmith, and some banjo duets by Messrs Fanshawe and Emmerson.—W. A. J.

HIGHBURY ATHENÆUM.—The promoters of the concert given on Thursday night, July 23, at the above hall presented a claim the general public rarely overlooks in announcing that the proceeds of the entertainment would be handed over to the treasury of that admirable institution, the German Hospital. Music, so constantly called into requisition for purposes of charity, has come to be regarded as one of the surest and readiest means at the disposal of financial committees for enforcing appeals and raising funds. With this in view it seems not a little strange that an organization which for one Sunday in the summer season fills every pulpit in the metropolis with an advocate, and on a certain Saturday later on is represented in our thoroughfares by fair solicitors of alms, should fail, at the same time, in turning to account the eloquent pleaders of the concert-room. It surely needs but an extension of the same well-planned and successful scheme to utilise music, and so secure the sympathies and aid of the ever-increasing multitude under its sway. In a series of concerts, with a musical festival at St Paul's or at the Albert Hall, music might be made not only to assert its own charm and dignity, but its value as a servant in the cause of charity. At the present moment organization is the only thing required. That musicians of various kinds and degrees are anxious to assist in the truly blessed work the promoters of the concert last Thursday placed beyond a doubt. If the result fell short of satisfying those anxious to see on such occasions the most desirable illustrations of art to the fore, the performance for all that convinced the audience that good intentions were at least in full activity. Hearty applause was won by the generally vigorous manner in which a long list of songs was rendered by Mdme Liebhart, Miss Jose Sherrington, Miss Annie Albu, Miss Coyte Turner, Mr Iver McKay, Mr Conrad Formes, and Mr Herbert Richardson. Nor were the efforts of the violinist, Mr Walter Abbott, allowed to pass unrecognized. Occasionally the kindly disposition of the public was too severely taxed. No consideration of goodwill and purity of motive could lead one to overlook the delinquencies in some of the pianoforte accompaniments, and even the cloak of charity was not found wide enough to cover the poverty of the band when engaged on the overture (*Fra Diavolo*) by Auber.—L. T.

MR MALCOLM LAWSON gave a concert at Princes' Hall last week, when a selection from his "Songs of the North" was performed; some for solo voices, and others with refrain for double quartet. Most of the airs are of old Scottish origin, but some are the composition of Mr Lawson. Mdme Fassett, Miss Hope Glenn, and other vocalists, including Mr Lawson, contributed to the performances; the concert giver and Miss Carmichael officiated as pianoforte accompanists.

MDME ADELINA HIRLEMANN gave a successful concert on Wednesday, July 15, at 46, Wimpole Street (by kind permission of Sir George Hodgkinson), when a numerous audience assembled. Mdme Hiramann sang several times with much effect, and gave with special charm Gounod's "Au printemps" and Dessauer's bolero, "Ouvrez, ouvrez," also joining Mr Orlando Harley in Lucantoni's "Una notte a Venezia." Mr George Power sang two songs by Mr Ernest Ford with much expression, and Mr Isidore de Lara appeared with his usual success. Miss Giovanna Ameris and Mr Owen Evan Thomas also assisted, and a special effect was made by Mr George Gear in his charming song entitled "Sweet Visions." Signor Guerin played some violin solos with skill, and Miss Minnie Bell pleased all with her clever recitation from Longfellow's "Hiawatha." The conductors were Signor Caracciolo, MM. W. Bendall and George Gear.

MDME C. C. ROSSITER gave the first of a series of concerts at Neumeyer Hall on Monday evening, July 27, when several of her pupils had an opportunity of displaying their talents before a friendly audience, the most noteworthy item being, perhaps, a recitation by Miss Madeline Rowsell, only thirteen years of age, who gave Dickens' "Serjeant Buzfuz's Speech" with considerable humour. In addition to the pianoforte playing of Mdme Rossiter in a "Concert-stück" by Weber, she also accompanied the greater part of the singers. Some well chosen songs were given by Misses Swinfen and Summers, Messrs Robert Stroud and Ernest Conby; two pianoforte pieces—"Grande Valse" by Wollenhaupt, and an Irish Fantasia—were fairly well played by Miss Monique Le Sage and Miss Bertha Pearce respectively.—W. A. J.

SIGNOR RIA.—The musical *matinée* given by Signor Ria, the well-known artist, the possessor of a most agreeable tenor voice, and who is one of the *enfant-gâté* of our aristocratic and fashionable saloons, on Wednesday, July 29, at the beautiful residence of Mr and Mrs Lucas in Kensington, was a very great success. The chief feature in the programme was the singing of the *bénéficiaire*, worthily assisted by several eminent artists, amongst whom we may mention Mdme Hiramann, and Mdle Lablache, Mr Arthur Rousbey, and Charles Mason, Esq., an admirable amateur, who sang with great effect the air, "Largo al factotum," as well as several duets and trios with Mdme Hiramann and Signor Ria. The solo pianist was Signor Clemente, and the solo violinist, Herr Poznanski, both well-known artists. A capital "recitation" was most kindly given by the Marquis de Leuville, the well-known author-poet of "Entre-Nous." Signor Bisaccia, as accompanist, assisted in the complete success of this pleasing *matinée*.—(Communicated).

PROVINCIAL.

CLIFTON.—Mrs Roeckel, whose name is well-known in association with active work in connection with deserving and charitable objects, on Thursday evening, July 16, gave a pianoforte recital in the Alexandra Hall, Clifton, for the benefit of the Bristol Benevolent Institution, to a numerous audience. The programme, consisting exclusively of the works of female composers, was similar to that performed by her at the Loan Exhibition of Women's Industries, Queen's Villa, earlier in the season, Mrs Villiers, Miss Catherine Grace, and Miss Farler rendering important service in the vocal department. Mrs Roeckel's performance of the many pieces allotted to her was such as to accentuate her high reputation as a musician and composer, and at the same time it gave the audience convincing proof of her great physical endurance. Applause greeted her at the termination of each selection, and she had to respond to several encores. In addition to her own compositions, comprising "Handelian Dance," "Danse Russe," and "Summer Waves," which gave much pleasure, selections were taken from the works of Mrs Meadows White ("Andante espressivo"), Mrs Joseph Robinson, Kate Loder (Lady Thompson), Mrs Arthur Goodeve, Mdme Schumann, Fanny Hensel, Agnes Zimmermann, Lillie Albrecht ("Lament"), Virginia Gabriel, M. A. Dale, C. A. Ranken, Frances Allitsen, Florence May, Mdme Oury, Mary Travers, Mary Sanders, Maude Valerie White, C. Zeltner, and Mrs John Macfarren. Of the vocalists each performed her part admirably. One of the songs sung by Mrs Villiers ("Remember Me") was the composition of Mrs Roeckel, and Mrs Villiers' rendering of it was much appreciated, the last verse being repeated in response to a recall. The recital finished with Mdme Sainton-Dolby's brilliant duet from *St Dorothea*, played with great effect by Mrs Roeckel and her pupil, Miss Mary Parnell. As Mrs Roeckel generously undertook to pay all the expenses of the concert, the amount derived from the sale of tickets, which goes undiminished to the Benevolent Institution, will be very acceptable.—*Clifton Chronicle*.

LEEDS.—TRINITY COLLEGE, LONDON.—The following is the list of the successful candidates who passed the practical examination in vocal and instrumental music at the Town Hall, Leeds, on the 7th and 8th July, the examiner being Mr Humphrey J. Stark, Mus. Bac., Oxon., and the local representative and secretary, Dr William Spark:—Senior Division: Pass Section—Constance Ash (Dr Spark), pianoforte; Gertrude Ash (Dr Spark), pianoforte; Maria Richardson Cockrane (Dr Spark), pianoforte; Mary Eliza Dyson, pianoforte; Emily B. Foster (Miss Smailes), pianoforte; Christie Green (Mrs R. Smith), organ; Ernest Jagger (Mr J. N. Hardy), pianoforte; Alice Lund (Miss Carrodus), pianoforte; Gertrude Manton (Mr J. N. Hardy), pianoforte; Anne Jane Mapplebeck (Mr J. Wilson), singing; Willie Marsden (Dr Spark), organ; Albert Wood (Dr Spark), pianoforte; John Alfred Wormald (Mr J. B. Longley), organ. Junior Division: Honours—Winifred Burman (Dr Spark), pianoforte; Harold Sidney Callum (Mr H. Heap), violin; John Myers

(Miss Carrodus), pianoforte; Kate Pigott (Miss Carrodus), pianoforte; Florence Mary White (Miss Sanderson), pianoforte. Pass Section—Annie Bailey (Miss Carrodus), pianoforte; Frederick Blakey (Mr J. N. Hardy), pianoforte; Marian Firth (Mr B. Firth), pianoforte; Edith Mary Heron (Mr J. Wilson), pianoforte; Mabel Lambert (Miss Bland), pianoforte; Margaret Mortimer (Mrs Horsfield), pianoforte; Nellie Shackleton (Miss Carrodus), pianoforte; Lilian Augusta Smith (Mr S. A. Barkhausen), pianoforte; Florence Gertrude Spencer (Mrs Horsfield), pianoforte; Ada Ward (Mr J. W. Bowling), pianoforte; Annie Priscilla Woodhead (Mr G. Robinson), pianoforte. Primary Division: Isabella Mary Le Baite (Mr J. T. Smith), pianoforte; Florence Ling (Miss Wilson), pianoforte; Lionel Corsaine McK. Watson (Mrs Horsfield), pianoforte; Bertha Richtering (Miss Wilson), pianoforte; Mary Robinson (Miss Wilson), pianoforte. The next practical examination is fixed to take place in the Town Hall on December 21, 22, and 23 next. The number of candidates for both the examinations (theoretical and practical) held in Leeds this summer has been far in excess of any previous examination, there being no fewer than 162 candidates.

—o— Details and Strays.

COMMUNICATED BY L. L. L.

PAPERS, ANECDOTAL AND JOCULAR, RELATIVE TO GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL.

(BORN FEB. 23RD, 1685.)

(Continued from page 281.)

QUIN AND HANDEL.

At Mrs Cibber's house, of a Sunday evening, Handel used to meet Quin, who, in spite of native roughness, was very fond of music. The first time Mrs Cibber prevailed on Handel to sit down to the harpsichord, while Quin was present—on which occasion he played the overture to *Siroe*, and delighted the company with the jig at the end of it—Quin, after the great musician had left, being asked by Mrs Cibber whether he didn't think Mr Handel had a charming hand? replied, "A hand madam! you mistake, it's a foot." "Pooh! pooh!" said she, "Has he not a fine finger?" "Toes, by—madam!"

"RINALDO," THE FIRST ITALIAN OPERA GIVEN IN LONDON BY HANDEL.

The first genuine Italian opera performed in London, was that of *Rinaldo*, represented in the year 1710. The music was composed by Handel; and its success was so great as to prove irretrievably injurious to the interests of those persons whose employment it had been to furnish operas by selections from other masters. (N.B. Some of Handel's most charming songs occur in this, his first opera for the English.—*vide* "Lascia ch'io pianga"; "Il tricerbero humiliato"; "Vo far guerra"; the duo, "Al trionfo," &c.)

THE SERPENT AND HANDEL.

The first time the Serpent was used in a concert, at which Handel was presiding, he was so disgusted with the power and coarseness of its tones, that he called out in a rage, "Vat de teufel be dat?" On being told its name, he replied: "Oh! de Serpent! Aye, but it not be de serpent vat seduced Eve!"

SWIFT'S APPRECIATION OF HANDEL.

Some say that Signor Buononcini
Compared to Handel is a mere ninny;
Others aver that to him Handel
Is scarcely fit to hold the candle.
Strange that such difference there should be
Twixt tweedledum and tweedledee!

Swift, for this vulgar comment upon two of the greatest musicians ever known, should have been dragged through a horse pond. (N.B. Swift was innocent of these words.)

"THEODORA."

Theodora remained Handel's favourite work till the last. He said of this work "The Jews will not come to it as to *Judas Maccabeus* because it is a Christian story; and the ladies will not come because it is a virtuous one." When he said that he must have been thinking of the *soirées* and balls which the great ladies gave in order to deprive him of his audiences.

"THEODORA" (ITS NON-SUCCESS).

Theodora was so unsuccessful that Handel was glad to get professors, &c., to make use of tickets. Two gentlemen of that description having applied to him (after the failure of the above oratorio) for an order to hear *The Messiah*, he cried out: "Oh, your servant, mein-herren! you are tamnple tainty! you would not come to *Teodora*—der was room enough to tance dere when dat was

perform." Sometimes, however, says Burney, I have heard him, as pleasantly as philosophically, console himself and friends by observing, on seeing the bare seats, "Nevre moind, de moosic vil sound de petter."

TELEMANN AND HANDEL.

Handel, speaking of Telemann's quickness in composing, used to say that he could write a piece of church music in eight parts with the same expedition that another person would write a letter.

WALSH AND HANDEL.

By the publication of *Rinaldo*, Walsh is said to have gained £1,500, which drew from Handel this complaint—"My dear sir, as it is only right that we should be upon an equal footing, you shall compose the next opera, and I will sell it."

BUONONCINI, HANDEL, THE POPE, STRADA, AURELIO DEL PO, PRETENDER, AND THE DEVIL.

August, 1732.

SIR,—Being informed that some music of Buononcini was to be performed at the Operahouse, I went to see it; but being disappointed, retired to a friend's house, where happened to be a mixed company, whose conversation turned upon that subject. One of the company asked what might have been the occasion that the *Serenata* was not continued? Another answered that Strada's husband would not suffer her to sing in it, and took out of his pocket a *Courant* of June 9th, and read an advertisement which that gentleman had inserted in the following remarkable style:

"Whereas Signor Buononcini intends, after the *Serenata* composed by Mr Handel hath been performed, to have one of his own, and hath desired Signora Strada to sing in that entertainment, Aurelio del Po, husband of the said Signora Strada, thinks it incumbent upon him to acquaint the nobility and gentry, that he shall think himself happy in contributing to their satisfaction, but with respect to this request, hopes he shall be permitted to decline complying with it, for reasons best known to the said Aurelio del Po and his wife."

A fat, elderly gentleman started up with some emotion, "How is this, sir?" says he, "Pray read it once more." The other did so; and while he was reading it, the fat gentleman at every word would cry, "Observe, ay, pray observe, gentlemen! Good God! when shall I see this poor country free from practices? What dignity, what authority discovers itself in every line? Does this sound like the style of a poor Italian, who lets out his wife to sing for hire? I suppose you would make me believe this is Strada's husband, and no libel, I warrant you; no attempt against the government?"—"Ay, to be sure!" replied an old lady, "Everybody knows whose name begins with a P, and that it is pronounced in the beginning like those two letters P O. I suppose we shall hear by and by that Mr P. is no enemy to his country." I interrupted the old lady, and desired to know from whom she had this information, which I apprehended was the reverse of that gentleman's character. "Lord sir," replied the lady, "nothing can be plainer: for if he opposes a whig minister, must he not of course be for everything that is contrary to whig principles?" The fat gentleman seemed to frown at this; "Madame," said he, "Mr P., must, no doubt, have some concern in this affair, because it is a vile thing, and against the government; but I will undertake to prove that nobody could pen this advertisement but the Pretender himself. Why did you never hear of Marcus Aurelius, the famous statue on horseback? And what is a man on horseback but a Chevalier? Now we all know who the Chevalier is, and —"—"Ay, 'tis plain," cried a sober fellow who sat musing in a corner, "'tis very plain. Aurelio stands for the Pretender, Po for the Pope, and del for the Devil. Who could assume such dignity and majesty, but one who calls himself a Monarch? For reasons best known to the said Aurelio del Po, and his wife! Is not this the style of a King and his ministers? And would an Italian singing woman's husband presume to offer terms in this manner, to the nobility and gentry of Great Britain? No, no it must be the Pretender, who hath endeavoured to impose upon the nation under this disguise, and to open a correspondence with the Royal Academy of Music."

EFFING FOREST CHURCH CHOIR ASSOCIATION.—The fifth annual festival service of this association, which has for its patron the Lord Bishop of St Albans, was held on July 18th in the chapel of King's College, Cambridge, when was performed Tours' Evening Service in F, Stainer's anthem, "O clap your hands," and Woodward's *Te Deum* in D, with hymns by Macfarren, Stainer, &c. Preacher, the Rev. C. J. Ridgeway, M.A. A special train conveyed the members from Liverpool Street to Cambridge. The service was conducted by Mr Walter Latter. Dr Mann, organist of King's College, presided at the organ, and the general arrangements were superintended by the hon. secretary, the Rev. W. L. Wilson.

NEW MUSICAL CLUB.

Now that the musical taste of this country has become so developed, especially in the metropolis, the long felt want of a recognized place of rendezvous for musicians, both amateur and professional, is about to be supplied by the formation of a club, which is to embrace culinary comforts and home-like benefits and recreation of our best and oldest clubs with the additional advantages of dressing, practice or rehearsal rooms, and a concert-room, to be devoted to musical *réunions* to be held from time to time. The preliminary list of three hundred members is nearly complete, and comprises some of the most talented artists and best known names in the musical world. An honorary committee of influential gentleman has been formed to carry out the management of this enterprise, which seems likely to prove of great utility to the profession. All applications for membership should be addressed to the secretary, 52, New Bond Street.—W. A. J.

LECTURE ON TROMBONES.

A lecture will be given on Wednesday, August 5th, at 5 p.m., in the Music Section of the Inventions Exhibition, on "Trombones, their History and Utility," by Mr George Case, when the "Lamentation of David over Absalom," by Heinrich Schütz (composed in 1629 at Dresden), for bass voice with accompaniment of trombone quartet and organ, as well as the two "Equallen" by Beethoven, for trombone quartet alone, will be performed for the first time in England. The singer is to be Mr Stanley Smith, of Westminster Abbey, and the organist, Mr H. J. B. Dart. Messrs George Case, Charles Geard, and the brothers Matt will form the trombone quartet.

THE FIRST NEGRO MINSTRELS.

In 1838, "Hey Jim Along, Jim Along, Josie" was sung by John Smith, or "Nigger Jack" as he was called. Smith was afterward identified with circus companies, and died a few years ago in Melbourne. He was the originator of the double song-and-dance business. Coleman, Frank Brower, and Dan Emmett did some song-and-dance work at the Franklin Theatre in New York in 1841. John B. Gough sang some negro songs and comic character songs at the same place of amusement. In 1842 the first band of minstrels was formed and gave a benefit performance at the Bowery. They then effected a complete organization and opened at the Chatham Theatre. The artists were Frank Brower as bones; Billy Whitlock, banjoist; Dan Emmett, fiddle; and Dick Pelham, tambourine. They appeared between the play and farce at the Park Theatre a few nights and then went to England, but the tour was a failure. From this crude beginning sprang all the bands of later days. A circus agent, James Dumbleton, caught the idea and organized a band consisting of Gill, Pelham, White, Harrington, Stanwood, and others. They were called "The Ethiopian Minstrels," and created a *furor* when they went to England. They were the first to give a first part; that is to appear in full dress as it is done at the present time.

Christy then came to the front and maintained the palm for many years. The Christy Minstrels were organized in Buffalo, N.Y., by E. P. Christy. Dick Hooley, Earl Pierce, and George Christy, whose real name was Harrington, were members. In 1843-4 they made the rounds of the cities, but wisely located in New York. E. P. Christy made a fortune of 400,000 dollars, but went insane for fear the war would sweep away his property, and killed himself. George Christy, after making a large amount of money, died in poverty. John Diamond was the first white boy who ever danced a jig with a black face. P. T. Barnum picked him up and made a great deal of money with him. Diamond, however, was a rascal, and was sent to prison for theft, and finally died a drunkard. A negro boy, Juba, from South Carolina, was the greatest jig dancer that ever appeared before the public. Charles E. White is the oldest living performer who has made burnt cork a speciality. Dan Gardner was a famous "negro" performer and a favourite clown. His daughter married Edwin Adams.

The first man who ever played on the banjo in public was Joe Sweeney, and his banjo was a gourd with four strings. In 1843 there was a show running in Pratt Street, Baltimore; admittance, 12½ cents; children, half-price. Edwin Booth sustained the bone end, John Sleeper Clark banged the tambourine, and Matt O'Brien was the middle-man. Booth played solos on the banjo. Clark is now a popular comedian and manager in London, and O'Brien is general superintendent of the Southern Express.—*Alta California*.

IGNORANCE IN MUSIC.

The great defect in the public is their ignorance. Voltaire said that the French did not possess an epic head. They possess a musical head just as little. At any rate, a feeling for music is less developed in them than in the Germans, the Italians, the Belgians, the English, and the peoples of the North. The De Goncourts wrote: "That which hears more absurdities than anything else is a painting in a picture-gallery." This I believe; but I must be allowed to add: and a concert-room. The absurdities a man hears uttered by his fellow-citizens concerning music pass all conception. In his little book on Georges Bizet, M. Edmond Galabert says he heard the overture to *La Favorita* characterised as "learned." This is the finishing stroke. I myself have known very worthy people, at a performance of Hector Berlioz' *Roméo et Juliette*, take Queen Mab's Scherzo for the Funeral March, and *vice versa*. . . . However, it does not much matter what absurdities we may hear from idiots. But, unfortunately, the general ignorance of the public does not allow them to understand any music lightly removed from the popular ditties of a buffo opera. A German audience is much more respectful than a French audience. It will not be found judging a musical work by means of an insulting epigram. It is the same in England and in Belgium. We have only to compare, for instance, the reception accorded our musicians when they produce their works abroad, with that which falls to the lot of an English, Russian, Danish, or German work—if modern. Ignorance! And it is not the habit of making girls learn, willy-nilly, the insupportable piano which will develop musical education.

The piano is simply an accomplishment, a bait to catch a husband; the instrument is dumb after marriage, and—what seems paradoxical—girls, even if they have learnt music, do not understand, do not feel, do not like it. They will utter with the greatest candour most unlikely opinions, and, if they often visit the Opéra-Comique, they do so because it is the theatre for introducing marriageable young people to each other. . . . This ignorance engenders fatally the taste for what is vulgar, and, unfortunately, if the upper classes did not first spread it about, they are guilty of preserving it in favour and of giving it the consecration of fashion. Nothing is more frequent than to meet in society gentlemen and ladies of good family, well brought up, well educated, lovers of art-objects, of valuable trifles, delighted to surround themselves with high-priced porcelain, with Chinese lacquer-ware, Japan bronzes, antique furniture and Flemish tapestry, well versed in literature, connoisseurs of pictures, engravings, and statues, bibliophiles always on the look-out for rare editions; exacting in matters of elegance, domestic service, and comfort; discussing with the tailor or dressmaker the most minute details of a ball dress or a fashionable costume; living generously, drinking only wines of fine quality, and dealing only with noted tradesmen; they are epicures, hard to please, and artists in what concerns an intelligent and luxurious style of life! They ought logically to be delicate Parnassians in the matter of music; their natural defect ought to be an excessive love of distinction; but such is far from being the case. What they ask of music are the rhythms of the quadrille, the hiccough of the fashionable singer, the amusing bit of drollery one hums in the corridor of a theatre, the attraction after which all Paris runs with mad enthusiasm!

They have a religious feeling for their senses, and treat them only to refined pleasures; their organs of sight, smell, and taste accept only enjoyment of exquisite quality, but their sense of hearing, poor thing, is irresistibly attracted to the platitudes of equivocal stanzas and the noisy outbursts of a low band, and from that time forward all other music is hateful to them! The second defect of the French public is *intolerance*. I am not speaking of the intolerance which, with deliberate purpose, causes a piece to be hissed or an artist to be tabooed; I have in mind the harsh, unreasonable, exacting spirit which nothing satisfies, the jealous duenna, as it were, of art, that greets novelty with envious bitterness, and reads the sentence condemning a contemporary in the works of a deceased master; the mania for disparagement which is exhibited at the birth of every hitherto unacted opera; which will not put up with mediocrity, and which, though taken with what is vulgar, does not consider any effort sufficiently elevated, or any expenditure of talent sufficiently ample to satisfy its avidity. What a first night's audience like so much to say is:

"Pooh! It is only mediocre; it is not a masterpiece!" thus crushing the author beneath the celebrated scores of his predecessors, forgetting that a fine work by those masters was almost always not produced till after fifteen platitudes. Time has caused the latter to be forgotten, and the public recollect only the works which were successful.

Yes, we know it is not a masterpiece. But, forsooth, at what period were masterpieces found kicking about in the gutter? Have even the most renowned composers signed nothing but masterpieces? Before producing *Zampa*, Herold—for Herold's name is now on everyone's tongue—wrote nineteen French and two Italian scores. Halévy wrote ten works before *La Juive*, and ten after. Out of Auber's forty operas how many are good? Who remembers, if we except two or three titles, Rossini's innumerable Italian operas? Donizetti composed fifty dramatic works. Who can mention more than four which are enduring? Verdi, less prolific than his predecessors, and perhaps more frequently successful, has signed no fewer than twenty-four operas. Who knows the titles of *Giovanna d'Arco*, *Stiffelio*, or *Simone Boccanegra*? Before having a translation made of *Orfeo ed Euridice*, which marks his transformation, and before writing for the French stage in the style he inaugurated, Gluck patched up a dozen lyric works in the Italian fashion. And Mozart? And Meyerbeer, that bosom friend of the public?—did not he pass from the German style (*Abimelek* and *La Fille de Jephthé*) to the Rossinian (*Emma di Resburgo*, *Margherita d'Angiù*, &c., and *Il Crociato*)? and did he not abandon that style to create a new one? to employ one more individualistic and more clearly defined in the celebrated operas you have been applauding for the last fifty years? These examples, commonplace and perfectly notorious as they are, do not relate, moreover, to mere nobodies. When, I ask, did you ever see a composer begin with a brilliant success and with an irreproachable work? Let any person mention only one such instance! Yet this is what you are for ever so acrimoniously demanding. At every period, celebrated men were allowed to give the world what was bad before enriching it with what was good. At the present day it seems as though artists of merely moderate talent ought to assert their position by a masterpiece at first going off! This is supremely unjust. Everything is permitted in deceased authors: the mediocre, the bad, and the execrable find defenders, but a work which is ordinary, simply ordinary, may kill a modern author. Suppose celebrated musicians had met with such cold reserve, would the catalogue of their operas be as long as it is? Their contemporaries then must have been less particular and more easy to content than the present generation. The consequence is that their fate was a brilliant one; that they achieved glory and fortune, and that their name, after their death, is still brilliantly perpetuated by one or several works which have survived them. In other words, the theatres having been widely opened to them, they were enabled to learn their trade by experience; possessing the right of producing bad works, they succeeded in producing some remarkable ones. But this apprenticeship is stubbornly denied our present composers, who often die without a reputation worthy of their talent. We have the case of Bizet in proof of this.

From this ignorance and this intolerance there springs another evil: the absence of a current of general opinion and indifference.

If the public cannot of themselves form a healthy judgment as to what is good or bad, if they are *a priori* inclined to mistrust and ill-natured suspicion of every new work, it follows that they do not know what to desire, to like, and to adopt. Hence you see them, at a week's interval, condemn quite different works: old opera, with its old-fashioned, antiquated style, which is revived to please them, and modern opera, conceived according to a new system of poetics, and with a completely contrary tendency.

"Auber and Adam! Those are our gods!"—In the hopes of obtaining your approbation some one writes a comic opera in imitation of the masterpieces of these composers. You shrug your shoulders.—Enlightened by the want of success, he supposes you prefer the modern style.—You then exclaim: "Take us back to the stock-pieces!"

Confounded and surprised, the musician at once supposes you like a just medium, a fusion, a compromise. . . . You do not like that more than aught else!

You sometimes, also, happen to admire exclusively some ques-

tionable work of a celebrated author, and employ it to discredit his other scores, even though they are very superior to it. "Oh! *Les Huguenots*!"—"Oh! *Faust*!"

Definitively, is the public taste Italian, French, or German? No one knows. . . . In reality, it is acquired by routine from consecrated works, names beyond dispute, and ready-made reputations. In a restricted circle, the subscribers to the Conservatory are a faithful picture of the French public generally. In that sanctuary of classical music, certain predilections are transmitted from father to son; admiration is hereditary, and the ecstasy business is arranged in an invariable manner. If these people resist the introduction of new works and the performance of untried pieces, it is because they would otherwise be compelled to listen, to devote uninterrupted attention to what was going on, to form their own opinion, and to applaud without preliminary rehearsals. They prefer the comfort of a conventional pleasure, and the indolent beatitude of assured and foreseen transports.

GEORGES SERVIÈRES.

EXCERPTS FROM PARKE'S MUSICAL MEMOIRS.

EXCERPT No. 90.

1829.

(Continued from page 470.)

On Monday the 8th of June the King had an evening party and concert at his palace in St James's, to which the members of the royal family, the principal ambassadors and ministers, and a great number of the nobility and gentry were invited. The vocalists were Mdlle Sontag and Nina Sontag, Mmes Camporese, Pisanoni, and Malibran; Signori Curioni, Zuchelli, Donzelli, and De Bagnis. Amongst the instrumental performers were Messrs Linley, Dragonetti, Puzzi, Cramer, and Attwood. The concert concluded before one o'clock. The suite of apartments were thrown open on the occasion, and presented a scene of great magnificence and brilliancy.

Music must be very flat on the Continent when such singers as Velluti and Mme Camporese come to England merely on the speculation of singing at concerts. The latter had a public benefit-concert at the Dowager Marchioness of Salisbury's, in Arlington Street, on Friday, June 12, at one guinea a ticket!

On Saturday, May 2, a new opera, called *Masaniello*, or, *The Dumb Girl of Portici*, was produced at Drury Lane Theatre. This piece, the success of which was complete, is taken from *La Muette de Portici*; the music, composed by M. Auber, is characteristic and beautiful. Mr Braham and Miss Betts were particularly happy in the airs allotted to them; and Mr T. Cooke, the leader of the band at that theatre, sang and acted his part, Don Alphonso, in the opera very respectably. Though it appears curious for a leader of the band to ascend from the orchestra and act on the stage, it is not more so than the following *vice versa* instance of locomotion: Cubit, an actor once belonging to Covent Garden Theatre some years ago, who was a tolerable violinist, during one of his summer trips, played Hamlet in a provincial theatre, and musicians being scarce there, he actually descended into the orchestra, in the dress of the royal Dane, and played the fiddle between the acts! At Covent Garden Theatre a part of Weber's celebrated opera, *Der Freischütz*, was represented on Wednesday, June 3, by German singers and in German words, to German music. The performers were M. Rosner, first tenor to the Duke of Brunswick, in the part of Mar (Adolf); M. Schutz, in the character of Casper; Mdlle Schweitzer, principal soprano to the Duke of Hesse Cassel, as Agatha; and Mme Rosner, as Anchan, the soubrette, companion of Agatha. They introduced some of the original music of the opera, not till then performed in England, particularly a *scena* by Casper, which was admirably given by M. Schutz. These performers collectively displayed much ability. It is not, however, surprising that they were attended by a thin audience, as an opera in that anti-dulcet language, the German, is, with the exception of the music, as little calculated to delight our English citizens as a curtain lecture or a feast postponed.

Vauxhall Gardens opened for the season on Monday, June 1, with a variety of entertainments. The principal novelty of the evening was the performance in the Saloon of Rossini's comic opera, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, in which the chief parts were sustained by Signori Torri, Pellegrini, De Angioli, Mme de Angioli, Miss Fanny Aytoun, and Mme Castelli. These performers, who are well-known to the public, displayed their usual abilities; it is not, however, likely that this refined species of entertainment will become popular with that part of the public who now visit Vauxhall. The gardens presented great diversity of polite amusements, from the smoking-room to the Italian opera!

At the English Operahouse a new and interesting melodrama was produced on July 2, entitled *The Sister of Charity*. It is a translation from a foreign drama, and is a mixture of the serious and pathetic, occasionally relieved by scenes of a comic character. *The Sister of Charity* is in itself clever and entertaining, and being aided by the admirable acting of Miss Kelly and Mr Keely, will no doubt prove highly attractive. The piece was received with great applause, and experienced a long run.

At the same theatre a new opera, composed by Ferdinand Ries, called *The Robber's Bride*, was produced on the 15th of July. It is a translation of the German drama, *Die Rauber Brant*, which is popular on the continent. The music of this opera is rich in concerted pieces and choruses; it was loudly applauded. It was most effectively got up, and must afford high gratification to every lover of music. It was adapted by Mr Hawes, and is creditable to the talent of that gentleman. Mr H. Phillips, as the Count, did ample justice to the difficult music of the character, and gave his last air with great feeling and expression. Mr Sapio exerted himself very successfully, and Miss Betts in her *scena*, "Ere distraction," was highly impressive. A glee by the banditti was encored. The proprietor of this theatre is entitled to the thanks of the musical world for this as well as his former productions. It must not be forgotten that Mr Arnold was the first who gave to the English public Weber's popular opera, *Der Freischütz*. The King's Theatre closed on August 1 with Cimarosa's opera, *Gli Orazi e Curiazi*. The two winter theatres opened as usual for the season in the early part of October.

A new drama, called *Shakspeare's Early Days*, was produced at Covent Garden Theatre on October 30. The agreeable and varied overture to this piece, by Mr Bishop, was loudly and deservedly applauded, as well as the music in the fairy scene, composed and compiled by Mr Stansbury. The piece was tolerably well received.

At the same theatre a new opera, called *The Night Before the Wedding*, and the *Wedding Night*, was performed on November 17. This piece is taken from a French opera, entitled *Les Deux Nuits*. The music is for the greatest part by Boieldieu, and the management of it has been ably performed by Mr Bishop. The opera abounds with ingenious choruses and concerted pieces. Mr Wood sang his part with great effect, and Miss Hughes gave hers admirably. It was on the whole favourably received.

Under the immediate patronage of His Majesty, the pupils of the Royal Academy of Music performed at the King's Theatre, on Dec. 12, Mozart's Italian comic opera in two acts, entitled *Così fan tutti*, the principal characters by Miss Childe, Miss Tucker, and Miss Bromley, Mr Brizzi, Mr F. Smith, and Mr E. Seguin. The band, with two or three exceptions, was composed of the pupils, under the direction of Mr C. Potter, and was led by Mr C. A. Seymour. This opera yields in rank to none of those works of the great composer which continue to bid defiance to the capricious changes in musical taste. A great deal of applause was bestowed on the splendid effusions of Mozart's genius, and on the correct and effective manner in which they were given by the singers, &c.

(To be continued.)

WAIFS.

Mdme Krauss is resting at Melzo, near Milan.

An Italian Philodramatic Society is being organized in St Paul, Brazil.

The Anfiteatro Fenice, Trieste, will open in September with *Ernani*.

Mdme Marchesi will pass her vacation this year at Vöslau, near Vienna.

Grau's French Opera Company have been very unsuccessful in Canada.

Next season the Stadttheater, Cologne, will be lighted by electricity.

Don Santiago Moraleda, organist of the Chapel Royal, Aranjuez, has died of cholera.

The tenor, De Sanctis, has left the stage and opened a school of singing at Buenos Ayres.

J. Rosenhain, composer, Baden-Baden, has been created a Knight of the Legion of Honour.

Charles Lecocq has completed his new work, *Plutus*, intended for the Paris Opéra-Comique.

It is said that Mdme Bilbaut-Vauchelet will succeed Mdle Isnac at the Paris Grand Opera.

Mr Mapleson is said to have secured Giannini and Del Puente for his approaching American tour.

Tristan und Isolde was recently performed at the Court Theatre, Sondershausen, for the first time there.

The fourteenth triennial meeting of the German National Sängerbund of America was brought to a close on the 8th July.

Czibulka's operetta, *Pfingsten in Florenz*, met with but a cold reception on its first production at the Carl-Schulze-Theater, Hamburg.

It is reported that Hans von Bülow intends proceeding with the Meiningen Orchestra to Rio Janeiro, for the purpose of giving concerts there.

All the Municipal Authorities of Bari, his native place, 20 musical societies, and numerous bands, attended the funeral of the composer, Nicola De Giosa.

The American Music Teachers' National Association numbers 900 members, of whom quite 500 attended the annual meeting recently held in New York.

The conductor of the Milan Opera Company, which has been touring successfully in America, will shortly visit Europe for the purpose of engaging some fresh artists.

The Imperial Operahouse, Vienna, re-opened for the season with *Das goldene Kreuz* of Ignaz Brüll, Herr Wiegand, of the Hamburg Stadttheater, appearing as Bombardon.

The Mass which will be performed this year at the Cathedral, Turin, in memory of King Charles Albert, is one composed expressly for the occasion by Remigio Renzi, of Rome.

Mdlle Fierens, lately a pupil of the Conservatory of Music, Brussels, where she greatly distinguished herself, has been engaged by M. Verdhurt for the Théâtre de la Monnaie.

Señor Michelena, manager of the Teatro Real, Madrid, has left that capital in order to conclude personally engagements pending with various leading artists for the coming season.

"By the way, how old are you, dear little woman?" She enquired. "I was born in '68," was the reply. "In that case," continued the first Speaker, "I am a year older than you; I was born in '69."

The New York Musurgia Society offers a prize of 100 dollars for the first and 50 for the second best four-part song, with or without accompaniment, all composers resident in the United States being eligible to compete.

The twenty-sixth annual Festival of the Norfolk and Suffolk Church Choral Association was held in the Cathedral at Norwich on Thursday, July 23. About four hundred choristers joined in the service. The preacher was the Ven. Leslie Randall, Archdeacon of Buckingham.

"Sings a sweet girl graduate," says the New York *Musical Courier*, "'I love to sing when I am glad; Song is the echo of my gladness. I love to sing when I am sad, For song makes sweet my very sadness.' The obvious continuation is: 'I love to sing when I am mad; It drives my neighbours into madness.'"

DAYS GONE BY.

Home, revisited and changed,
A face, too well beloved, estranged—
Like *such* are days gone by!
Or, like winds that sob and sigh
Through night's blankness, ceaselessly,
Are the days gone by.

As the silence and the gloom
Of a long deserted room,
Or the sunlight on a tomb,
Seem the days gone by;
Age in childhood's vacant nook,
Faded rose leaves in a book,
Whereon tear-dim'd eyes re-look—
Such are days gone by.

Yet, memory soft'ning bitterness,
Grief subdued to tenderness,
Fuller hope, if joy the less,
Rise from days gone by.

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C. HOOPER.

DRURY LANE THEATRE.—Mr Augustus Harris re-opened "old Drury" on Monday evening, July 27, with the late Charles Reade's popular drama, *It's never too late to mend*, originally produced at the same theatre under the title of *Gold*, when Mr E. T. Smith was manager. Judging from the hearty applause awarded by the audience throughout the performance, Mr Harris has made a wise choice for his opening piece, and there seems little doubt but that *It's never too late to mend* will have a long and successful run.

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